

## **AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

## **LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

Claims 1-11 (canceled).

12. (New) A method for operating an internal combustion engine in overrun condition, comprising:

monitoring a control signal for a power actuator of the internal combustion engine, wherein the monitoring is released when predetermined release conditions are met, and wherein the release conditions include exceeding of a release speed of the internal combustion engine;

after the release, comparing the control signal for the power actuator of the internal combustion engine to a threshold value; and

triggering an error response if the control signal exceeds the threshold value;

wherein the release speed is varied as a function of an intervention of an idling speed control in formation of the control signal.

13. (New) The method as recited in claim 12, wherein the release speed is selected from at least two values.

14. (New) The method as recited in claim 13, wherein the highest of the at least two values is independent of the intervention of the idling speed control.

15. (New) The method as recited in claim 13, wherein no release of the monitoring is permitted below the lowest of the at least two possible values.

16. (New) The method as recited in claim 15, wherein the release speed is selected from exactly two values, the lower of the two values being selected if the intervention of idling speed control does not exceed a predetermined threshold value.

17. (New) The method as recited in claim 15, wherein the release speed is selected from at least three values, one of two lower values being selected if the intervention of the idling speed control undershoots a threshold value that is individually assigned respectively to one of the lower values.

18. (New) The method as recited in claim 12, wherein the release speed is selected by accessing a characteristics curve that is addressed using the intervention of the idling speed control.

19. (New) The method as recited in claim 12, wherein the intervention of the idling speed control is recorded in a control loop of the idling speed control one of before and after formation of an actuating variable.

20. (New) A control unit for operating an internal combustion engine in overrun condition, comprising:

an arrangement for monitoring a control signal for a power actuator of the internal combustion engine;

an arrangement for releasing the monitoring when predetermined release conditions are met, and wherein the release conditions include exceeding of a release speed of the internal combustion engine;

an arrangement for comparing, after the release, a control signal for the power actuator of the internal combustion engine to a threshold value; and

an arrangement for triggering an error response if the control signal exceeds the threshold value; wherein the control unit varies the release speed as a function of an intervention of an idling speed control in formation of the control signal.

21. (New) The control unit as recited in claim 20, wherein the released speed is selected from at least two values.

22. (New) The control unit as recited in claim 20, wherein the control signal is one of an injection pulse width for a fuel injection valve and a command signal for an actuator that meters in air.